

Utah's best workplaces

Huntsman announces those firms that redefine 'on the job'

By Rosemary Winters
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Gary Aoki likes working at Radius Engineering because he can come in late on a powder day, carving a few good turns before he has to buckle down on a project.

His co-worker June Morgan also enjoys the flexibility in her workweek, and she relishes the camaraderie shared among Radius employees.

Those are some of the reasons Radius landed on a top 10 list of "Best Companies to Work For," designated by the Utah Department of Workforce Services. Gov. Jon Huntsman Jr. announced the award winners at a luncheon Tuesday.

At a time when many companies are slashing employee benefits to save a buck, these companies earned their accolades by keeping generous health insurance programs in place, offering child care options to working parents and redefining the traditional 9-to-5 workday.

Many of the companies offer flexible pretax spending accounts, on-site gyms and cafeterias, paid time-off for volunteer work, tuition reimbursement and benefits for part-time workers. Four of the companies pay 90 percent to 100 percent of their employees' health insurance; the rest cover 70 percent to 89 percent.

"It's the simple things that companies do for their employees that matter," said Lynette Rasmussen, director of the Office of Child Care and an organizer of the awards.

Now in its seventh year, the awards program title changed from the "Work/Life Awards" to the "Best Companies to Work For" to reflect a partnership with *Utah Business Magazine*, which previously had its own best employers awards. The magazine will profile the winners in its May issue.

The goal, however, is the same: To create a community of employers who treat workers well and set a standard for others to follow, Rasmussen said.

The state selects the award winners by reviewing company profiles, conducting employee surveys and making on-site visits.

While grateful for the recognition, Radius president Dimitrije Milovich said that's not his motivation. "The goal is to be a great place to work - for its own sake."

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2005 top Utah companies to work for:

1-800 Contacts
ARUP Laboratories
Employer Solutions Group
Futura Industries
Nicholas & Co.
NPS Pharmaceuticals
Radius Engineering
Redmond Minerals
Regence Blue Cross Blue Shield of Utah
Sunshine Terrace Foundation